

DEPARTMENTAL REGULATION		Number: 2300-001
SUBJECT: Agriculture Traveler's Charge Card Program	DATE: May 15, 1984	
	OPI: Office of Finance and Management	

1 PURPOSE

This Regulation implements the Agriculture Traveler's Charge Card Program.

2 CANCELLATION

Departmental Notice 2300-14, dated November 7, 1983, is superseded by this Regulation.

3 BACKGROUND

The General Services Administration (GSA) has entered into a competitively-awarded contract with Diners Club, Inc., for the issuance and maintenance of charge cards to be used by Federal employees to cover transportation, subsistence, and other allowable travel and transportation expenses incurred during official travel. (September 26, 1983, Federal Register; 48 F. R. 43727)

The Department conducted a pilot test of this program in three agencies between October 1 and December 31, 1983. Results were positive. It is anticipated that the following benefits will come from Department-wide implementation of the charge card program:

- a Reduced travel advance balances and better control of unused common carrier tickets will contribute to USDA's efforts to improve cash management and help reduce Treasury borrowing.
- b Reduced use of Government Transportation Requests (GTRs) will save paper, mailing, and processing expenses.

4 POLICY

Agencies must issue Diners Club individual charge cards to all permanent employees who travel at least twice a year. Other permanent employees may be issued the card if the agency wishes.

5 PROCEDURES FOR AGENCY IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAM

a Agencies must consult with the Fiscal and Accounting Division, Office of Finance and Management (OFM-FAD), to establish internal procedures for implementation and operation of the Travelers Charge Card Program, and to receive information on how to file applications for the charge cards.

b Agency procedures must assure that:

- (1) employees will receive information on how the program operates, how they are to use the charge card, and their responsibilities for safeguarding the card and paying charge card bills
- (2) employees will receive the Privacy Act notification relating to the use of their social security numbers in the program
- (3) the agency will take appropriate action to see that delinquent accounts are paid
- (4) the agency will return to Diners Club any charge card held by an employee who leaves, retires, or transfers out of the agency, or otherwise fails to qualify for holding the card
- (5) the agency will promptly report problems to OFM-FAD

c When OFM-FAD has approved agency internal procedures for managing the program, Diners Club will be notified and employee applications for the card may be submitted. OFM-FAD will conduct all liaison activities with Citicorp Diners Club not otherwise assigned to agencies in this Regulation.

6 AUTHORIZED USES

The card may be used only for expenses incurred in connection with official travel. Possession of the card does not exempt the holder from using Government contract carriers or Federal Travel Management Centers. Employees must return the card to their agency travel management official when asked to do so, or when their employment terminates.

7 GTRs, TRAVEL ADVANCES, TRAVEL VOUCHERS

a When an employee is issued a Diners Club charge card, the agency must retrieve any GTRs (Government Transportation Request, Form SF-1169) held by the employee and return them to the National Finance Center.

b Travel advances to card holders must be limited to the amount of anticipated non-card travel expenses such as taxi and limousine fares, meals which cannot be charged, and other incidental costs.

c There is no change in requirements for preparation and submission of travel vouchers. (NFC Voucher and Invoice Payments Manual, Title II, Chapter 2, Section 2, Travel Vouchers)

8 INSURANCE

Card holders will receive free travel insurance coverage of \$150,000 and free lost baggage insurance when transportation reservations are made and charged to the card.

9 TICKET RETURNS

Unused common carrier tickets which were purchased with a Diners Club charge card must be returned to the point of purchase for credit. These tickets are not to be sent to the National Finance Center.

10. PAYMENT OF CHARGE CARD BILLS

a Bills will be mailed directly to the card holder's home address.

b Card holders must pay Diners Club in full on or before the next billing date. This allows up to 25 days from the statement date to remit. There are no interest or late charges. However, agencies must act on delinquency reports from Diners Club.

c If a bill contains a disputed charge, the card holder must contact Diners Club to resolve the problem. A card holder may either

- (1) call Diners Club Corporate Services, toll free 800525-7490, or
- (2) write to

Citicorp Diners Club

Corporate Accounts Division

P.O. Box 5064

Denver, CO 80217

11 MANAGEMENT REPORTS

Diners Club produces the following reports for use by agency management:

- a RECAP - Review of Employee Charge Activity and Performance
- b RECAP Exception Listing - a list of lost or stolen cards or delinquent accounts
- c Projected Renewal Report - cards which are scheduled to be renewed
- d Agency Member List - a list of agency card holders
- e Individual Account Activity Summary
- f Trial Balance Report
- g Vendor Analysis Report - lists charges by vendor

Agencies must arrange to receive the Projected Renewal Report and the Trial Balance Report. To arrange to receive these and any other desired reports agencies must write to:

Diners Club
Corporate Services
182 Inverness Drive West
Englewood, CO 80112

12 INQUIRIES

Agency inquiries should be directed to the Fiscal and Accounting Division, Office of Finance and Management, 382-1204. Employees should contact their agency travel management officials.